Eisenhower Denies Cuba Invasion Plan

Former President Dwight D. Eisenhower denies he bequeathed to John F. Kennedy a plan to launch an invasion of Cuba, although he did order the Central Intelligence Agency to set up a camp to train emigre Cubans.

This latest version of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion comes out of a copyrighted interview with Eisenhower conducted by Newsday, a Long Island newspaper.

The former President is reported as wanting to set the record straight, in light of recent memoirs of the Kennedy administration written by Theordore C. Sorensen and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. which the general and his associates see as an attempt to link Eisenhower to the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Eisenhower specifically is said to have resented the Sorensen's comment that when Kennedy was inaugurated he "inherited the plan, the planners, and most troubling of all, the Cuban exile brigade. . . . Unlike an inherited policy statement or executive order, this inheritance could not be simply disposed of by presidential rescission or withdrawal."

Eisenhower is quoted as saying, "There was no tactical or operational plan even discussed" as of the day he turned the presidency over to Kennedy.

Eisenhower is reported as saying he told Kennedy "exactly what we had been doing with the Cuban refugee program," but the former chief executive is quoted as saying that "at no time did I put before anybody anything that could be called a plan (to invade Cuba.)"

The interviewer said that Eisenhower emphasized there was "no mandate, no commitment by me or anyone in my administration."

The Newsday account said Eisenhower ordered the CIA to launch a camp to "bolster the spirits of thousands who were fleeing the Castro dictatorship," and which would give them hope that "in time" they would oust the Communists.

Eisenhower is quoted as telling Kennedy shortly before the inauguration, "You people will have to decide what to do."

The interview also tells of a meeting between Kennedy and Eisenhower after the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Eisenhower says he told Kennedy that he should have used more power.

"There is no alternative. Force is a naked, brutal thing in this world. If you are going to use it, you have got to be prepared to go all the way," Eisenhower says he told Kennedy.